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*Official Records*

Disarmament Commission

311th meeting

Monday, 4 April 2011, 3 p.m.

New York

*Chair:* Mr. Al Bayati ..... (Iraq)

*The meeting was called to order at 3.12 p.m.*

**General debate** (*continued*)

**Mr. Seruhere** (United Republic of Tanzania): Mr. Chairman, I wish to join those who spoke before me in congratulating you for presiding over this session. I also congratulate the Bureau on its election to assist you in leading these deliberations to a successful conclusion. It was agreed last September, during the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, that the Disarmament Commission must be revitalized and be seen to work and contribute effectively to the fulfilment of the primary responsibility of the United Nations, that is, the maintenance of international peace and security, as enshrined in Article 1 of the Charter.

Why do we need disarmament now? This session of the Disarmament Commission comes on the heels of the global economic and financial crisis. It is also the first session after the leading nuclear-weapon States — the United States and the Russian Federation — took positive and practical steps towards nuclear disarmament. Participants will recall that the Heads of State of those two nations agreed in April 2010 that their Governments shall reduce their nuclear weapons significantly, targeting complete disarmament. In principle, they indicated to humanity as a whole that it is as possible as it is desirable to have a world free of nuclear weapons, and, indeed, other weapons of mass destruction. A window of opportunity for disarmament has been opened; no one should close it.

The need for disarmament is paramount today for two major reasons: one is to stop the damage that war and conflicts have inflicted on the global economy, and, more important, the loss of lives. Since the Second World War, regional wars and intra-State armed conflicts have increased, wreaking havoc on and causing untold suffering for the world population. They have also caused instability and the proliferation of weapons, including small arms and light weapons, and facilitated a rise in crime levels.

Small arms and light weapons have also been used to perpetrate horrendous acts of cruelty globally, particularly through acts of terrorism, piracy and violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms. So however one looks at it, armaments promote negative practices against humanity

The United Republic of Tanzania also supports the view held by many Member States that there is a nexus between security and development. With regard to nuclear disarmament, this nexus can be sustained by upholding the third pillar of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), namely, the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

A great deal of resources are used to develop and deploy armaments, and even more so in the case of nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons, including small arms in all their aspects.

Disarmament is the way forward if we wish to save those resources and ensure unlimited security. Those resources, if saved, could be used to help

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emerging and potential nuclear States, as well as States which possess resources for nuclear use, in developing related technology and ensuring security and environmental protection.

We welcome the continued support mentioned by the representatives of the European Union and Australia with regard to action against landmines. Anti-personnel mines, explosives and unexploded ordnance are a major cause of insecurity and loss of life. That slows and even reverses development. The United Republic of Tanzania, in cooperation with a Belgian non-governmental organization known as APOPO, has developed a very-low-cost, environmentally friendly technology for the detection of unexploded ordnance by using giant African rats. The project is known as SUA-APOPO. I invite the Disarmament Commission to consider using this technology in disarmament, particularly in mine detection.

Disarmament is possible in our lifetime. Let us make it happen.

**Ms. Aitimova** (Kazakhstan): I would like to congratulate you, Sir — our colleague the Permanent Representative of Iraq — on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission, as well as other members of the Bureau on their election. My delegation wishes to assure you of its full support and constructive engagement as you skilfully guide us through the deliberations ahead of us. I should like to express my deep appreciation to all participants in connection with our election to the vice-chairmanship of the Commission.

I am highly optimistic that the work of the Commission at this session will be more fruitful than it was at the previous one. I believe that in today's world, which is not so quiet or simple, we must be somewhat optimistic or we will not be able to move forward. We must do something; there are many, many things in our Governments' hands today.

I should like also to thank the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs for its untiring efforts to support the work of the Commission.

Since its independence, Kazakhstan has taken a principled stand on nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, contributing actively to the global multilateral effort. The country voluntarily renounced nuclear weapons and closed the Semipalatinsk nuclear-test site, the second-largest in the world, on 29 August 1991, and continues to promote initiatives aimed at reducing nuclear weapons with a view to their total abolition, especially this year, during the twentieth anniversary of the closure of the test site.

At our initiative, the General Assembly adopted resolution 64/35 on 2 December 2009, declaring 29 August as the International Day against Nuclear Tests. Numerous activities and projects are being undertaken throughout the year to galvanize momentum to ban nuclear tests and to move towards a world free of nuclear weapons. The Day is my country's vital contribution to the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and to the strengthening of the verification mechanism of this agreement. The country is equally committed to further enhancing the universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and is actively working on promoting the implementation of some of the key action plans arising from the May 2010 NPT Review Conference.

Kazakhstan, along with other countries of the region, has been instrumental in the creation of the Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone, which came into force on 21 March 2009, and plays a key role in strengthening regional and international peace and security arrangements. We urge the nuclear-weapon States to take the steps necessary for the early signing of the Protocol as a legally binding instrument for negative security assurances. The country is also making efforts nationally and within the region by developing a rigorous action plan to ensure the physical security of nuclear materials and equipment so as to prevent nuclear proliferation and terrorism.

Kazakhstan is committed to the formation of nuclear-weapon free zones and advocates the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, convinced that such a measure will lead to dialogue, peace, cooperation and trust in the entire Middle East region. We also believe that the nuclear-weapon-free zones in Central Asia, Latin America, Africa and South-east Asia will inspire other regions of the world as well so that our entire planet can become one common zone of peace and security.

My country considers it necessary to begin the process of drafting the fissile material cut-off treaty in the Conference on Disarmament. The country will join

others in mobilizing political will so as to make the Conference an effective part of the disarmament machinery, so that it can commence work on this important treaty and begin to address other pending issues on its work agenda.

We share the vision of countries around the world of a convention against nuclear weapons becoming a reality. My President, Nursultan Nazarbayev, has proposed the idea of a universal declaration of a nuclear-weapon-free world as a first step, leading gradually to a convention that could be an interim measure. Indeed, it is much better to do something, to go step by step, slowly but surely. We have no choice; we must succeed.

I wish to note here that President Nazarbayev was re-elected yesterday for five years with 95.5 per cent of the vote, according to preliminary reports.

Kazakhstan, the largest producer of uranium, which possesses the expertise and capacity to process highly enriched uranium into its low-enriched form, will host the nuclear fuel bank. Permission has been obtained in this respect from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and the fuel bank will operate under its surveillance. My country reiterates its support for the legitimate and inalienable right of each State party to the NPT to develop and use peaceful nuclear energy in compliance with all the requirements of the IAEA and the NPT.

Kazakhstan fully upholds the effective implementation of Security Council sanctions in the field of nuclear non-proliferation, with a view to averting the negative effects of nuclear threats to the maximum extent possible.

Last year, during its chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Kazakhstan undertook regional security measures to support those of the United Nations. The country promoted the implementation of the OSCE Athens Ministerial Declaration on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and on strengthening the Corfu process on the future of Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security. The OSCE summit in Astana, held late last year, was aimed at reinforcing global and regional efforts, and this year, as Chair of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, we will pursue efforts in the same direction.

Convinced of the need to consolidate and strengthen efforts against the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons through legally binding instruments, Kazakhstan is committed to lending its full support to the implementation of the recommendations of the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held last June in New York.

My country welcomes the commencement of negotiations on the Arms Trade Treaty and will participate actively in the preparatory sessions in 2011, with a view to ensuring a successful outcome to the 2012 Conference on the Treaty.

We believe that promoting disarmament on all fronts would also help to address other critical challenges facing the international community, including achieving the Millennium Development Goals, reducing poverty and promoting human dignity and well-being, as well as ensuring the protection of our precious planet.

**The Chair**: I thank the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan for the kind words she addressed to me. I agree with her that we have to be optimistic. With the support of the Bureau, the Secretariat and representatives, hopefully we will be able to go forward with this session.

**Mr. Benmehidi** (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to extend the warmest congratulations of the Algerian delegation on your election to the chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission and to assure you of our full support. We would like also to congratulate the other members of the Bureau of the Commission as well as the Chairs of the Working Groups. My delegation would in particular like to welcome the very relevant briefing given by Mr. Sergio Duarte, United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs.

Algeria associates itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia and Nigeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of African States, respectively.

The 2011 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission is especially important because it is taking place at the end of a cycle. It is therefore an

opportunity that we should take advantage of so that our work will end on a positive note through the adoption of highly awaited recommendations. To that end, our in-depth discussions must be driven by a true spirit of cooperation and a constructive attitude. It is useful to point out in that respect that the Disarmament Commission, as a unique deliberative body, is an important component of the disarmament machinery.

The agenda of the current session covers three important and specific questions, and it is likely, this time, to yield positive and promising results, especially since the global context of recent months has been encouraging. We must therefore continue this dynamic and make progress on the international disarmament agenda. I would like to assure the Commission that Algeria will spare no effort to contribute to the success of the Commission's work, which we see as a specialized deliberative body of the United Nations multilateral mechanism with an irreplaceable role in considering disarmament issues, including nuclear disarmament.

With respect to Working Group I, on nuclear disarmament, Algeria reiterates its principled position on the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, namely, the total elimination of nuclear weapons. In the current state of affairs, it is clear that much remains to be done to rid the work of such weapons. Indeed, the very existence of nuclear weapons poses an ongoing danger for humankind as a whole, which the persistence of military doctrines of certain nuclear-weapon States tends to perpetuate.

This situation is a serious source of concern for the vast majority of Member States. That is why the effective and ongoing commitment of the international community as a whole, in particular that of nuclear-weapon States, is crucial in order to achieve that goal, in accordance with article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the commitments made by States at the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences, including the 13 practical measures adopted by consensus in the year 2000.

In order to assess the progress possible in this area, it is crucial that nuclear disarmament measures be carried out in accordance with the principles of transparency, verifiability and irreversibility. Although nuclear non-proliferation is one of the pillars of the NPT, Algeria also calls for the effective and gradual implementation of article VI of the NPT by nuclear-weapon States. We also recall the importance that we place on abiding by the provisions of article IV, on the rights of States to research, develop and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The NPT's three pillars, which are mutually reinforcing, ensure the necessary balance of that instrument.

My delegation would like to stress that efforts aimed at non-proliferation must be deployed at the same time as those targeting nuclear disarmament. Furthermore, the conclusion of an international legally binding instrument through which nuclear-weapon States would grant security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States continues to be of the highest priority. That is why it is on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. I should point out in that regard that the discussions begun in the Conference on Disarmament once again foundered on the question of the programme of work. In any case, the programme of work adopted by consensus in 2009 under the Algerian chairmanship remains the appropriate reference.

At the regional level, the 2010 NPT Review Conference relaunched the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. We therefore believe that it is important to begin as soon as possible the necessary preparations for the organization of the conference in 2012.

With regard to the Working Group on the elements for a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade, we should make every effort to conclude this exercise so as to be able to launch the decade in a timely manner. It is therefore crucial to reach an agreement on the elements to be proposed to the General Assembly at its next session. Algeria believes that, so long as all delegations have the political will, momentum exists for the adoption of a declaration that is broader is scope and more ambitious in its objectives. My delegation therefore believes that the draft declaration should include the following elements.

It should reaffirm the need to achieve the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons; include the principles of transparency, verifiability and irreversibility and reaffirm the central role played by the United Nations as a universal, multilateral framework to review disarmament issues. The draft declaration should also underscore the particularly adverse consequences of

the arms race and the immense resources that it swallows up, which could be devoted, among other things, to development, the fight against poverty, disease and climate change. It should underscore the importance of adopting universally agreed standards in the area of conventional weapons. And, lastly, it should reiterate the commitment of the international community towards the prevention of, and the fight against, the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and its catastrophic humanitarian consequences.

With regard to concrete confidence-building measures in the area of conventional weapons, we welcome the establishment of Working Group III, tasked with proposing specific recommendations on confidence-building measures. This item is to be taken up once the elements for the draft declaration are defined, which has not yet been done. With respect to deadlines, the Algerian delegation believes that progress must be made on this item in order to move on to the third item.

Given all of the challenges that arise in the area of disarmament in all of its aspects and the stalemate at the level of certain mechanisms, Algeria reiterates its position on the need to organize the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, as set out in resolution 65/66, which decided to establish an open-ended working group in 2011 and 2012 to review the goals and agenda for the session and to set up a preparatory committee.

This 2011 session, the last of the three-year cycle, is therefore critical in many ways. Aware of the stakes entailed, Algeria approaches the current session with the desire to fully contribute with all Member States to the adoption of specific recommendations on the three items on the Commission's agenda, whose mandate can only be the stronger for it.

**Mr. Kvarnström** (Sweden): Let me first congratulate you, Mr. Chair, and the members of the Bureau on your assumption of your positions. You will find Sweden a constructive partner in supporting your efforts.

Sweden fully aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Hungary on behalf of the European Union. I will not repeat its contents but rather add some observations from my national perspective.

The Disarmament Commission was created to be the deliberative body on disarmament matters for the full membership of the General Assembly. One of its functions is to consider and make recommendations on problems in the field of disarmament. However, it is a fact that, for more than a decade, the Commission has failed to make any substantial recommendation. It is true that the deliberations have been vigorous and that they have clearly shown where the divisions among us are drawn. But if they are not moving us forward through concrete recommendations, they fail to add much value to discussion elsewhere, such as in the First Committee. Perhaps we are due for a discussion on our methods of work.

Given the strong global calls for solutions and progress in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, we have an obligation to seek results, and not simply produce policy statements along known lines. Seen together with the paralyzed state of the Conference of Disarmament, which has equally failed to make a substantial contribution for more than a decade, the state of the disarmament machinery is disheartening.

Our lack of results would perhaps be more understandable were it not for the fact that there have been significant developments in the world outside this room and that they have immediate relevance for our deliberations.

With regard to nuclear disarmament, the outcome document (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) of last year's Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) should provide our discussion with new oxygen. The entry into force of the New START treaty has shown that the reduction of existing arsenals is a living process. As noted in a recent article by some former senior United States politicians, nuclear deterrence is becoming increasingly hazardous and decreasingly effective. Continuing reliance upon it, they say, encourages or at least excuses the spread of nuclear weapons. Deeper reductions, including of tactical nuclear weapons, are therefore necessary. This would increase stability and security.

Yet there have also been negative developments that merit our consideration. The pillars of the NPT are mutually reinforcing. The increasing and unpredictable proliferation of nuclear technology for purposes other than peaceful uses is one of the most serious security

issues of our time. Some countries are defying NPT obligations, in one case even conducting nuclear tests, and are refusing to cooperate fully with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) or to allow the IAEA to verify that their nuclear programmes are of a peaceful nature. This is of deep and continuing concern.

The peaceful use of nuclear energy is the third pillar of the NPT. Sweden is a strong supporter of multilateral nuclear fuel approaches and the ongoing work to establish a nuclear fuel bank under the control of the IAEA. As a member of the IAEA Board of Governors as of autumn 2011, Sweden will contribute both to this work and to the Agency's important work in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

It is encouraging that the discussion of a global zero vision, whereby we would eventually reach a world free of nuclear weapons, has been revitalized. To get there, we need to avail ourselves of what we — being Scandinavian — could illustratively call a "Lego" approach, with mutually supporting building blocks. These include a verifiable fissile material cut-off treaty, which we believe is within reach, alongside the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the IAEA and its safeguards, deeper reductions, nuclear weapon free zones and other confidence-building measures. We applaud, in this context, the Secretary-General's engagement in revitalizing the Conference on Disarmament and the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly conducted last year. We look forward to its follow-up.

Sweden attaches great importance to strengthened control of transfers of conventional weapons, which through their unregulated and illicit spread in volatile regions are a serious threat to international security. We believe that the Disarmament Commission should carefully consider recommendations for continued work on this topic. Not least, the processes towards next year's United Nations Conference on an Arms Trade Treaty and the review conference on the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects should provide us with plenty of food for thought.

In conclusion, we hope that this year, as the Disarmament Commission comes to the end of its three-year cycle, we will have some results to show for our efforts, though we fear that yet again we might not. Meeting the General Assembly's request to agree on recommendations on elements for a declaration of a fourth disarmament decade would be a minimum. Making progress on the other two topics should be an imperative. Let us use these three weeks — a not insignificant period of time in today's world — in a way that will help this Commission regain some of its relevance.

**Mr. Sin Son Ho** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Allow me, first of all, on behalf of the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission. I sincerely wish you success in chairing this session. My delegation also fully supports the statement delivered by the Indonesian delegation on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Despite decades-long strenuous efforts of the international community for nuclear disarmament, the total elimination of nuclear weapons, which is the desire of humankind, remains of the highest priority due to certain specific countries' pursuit of their ambitions to wield world hegemony based on nuclear-weapon superiority. It is very clear that, as long as nuclear weapons exist in our globe and their use or threat of use continues, humankind will never be free of the danger of nuclear war and nuclear non-proliferation will never be brought to a fundamental solution.

As all of us are well aware, it is the United States that first developed and, without hesitation, used nuclear weapons in actual warfare in 1945. This, in turn, led several countries one after another to make the choice to possess nuclear weapons. The present United States administration is loudly talking about a nuclear-weapon-free world. However, its policy to monopolize nuclear weapons remains unchanged. Even today, the United States is stepping up the modernization of its nuclear weapons by conducting critical testing and spending a large amount of money under the pretext of securing the stability of its nuclear arsenal. On the other hand, the United States continues to maintain its huge nuclear forces deployed in areas of strategic importance around the world, and to rely on its nuclear doctrine as usual. Some countries are designated by the United States as targets of potential pre-emptive nuclear strikes because of their disobedience to the United States, and the substantial

nuclear threat against them are daily increasing. Those phenomena should no longer be overlooked.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), during the past 40 years, has played no role either in nuclear disarmament or in the elimination of nuclear threats, contrary to the high expectations of non-nuclear-weapon States. Rather, the nuclear Powers are now in a better position and their exclusive status is more justified. Furthermore, the NPT has been misused by certain countries as an instrument to pressure and interfere in the developing countries.

Therefore, the States members of the Non-aligned Movement have set the total elimination of nuclear weapons as an ultimate objective and submitted constructive and concrete proposals to this body to realize their goals. When the States with the largest nuclear arsenals, such as the United States, take the lead in nuclear disarmament, that will have a positive influence on the newly emerged nuclear-weapon States in various parts of the world and contribute to the total elimination of nuclear weapons from the planet.

My delegation takes this opportunity to draw attention to the issues of when and by whom nuclear weapons were deployed for the first time on the Korean peninsula; by whom the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is being blackmailed with nuclear weapons; and what is the true nature of the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula.

As is already well known, the ongoing nuclear threats of the United States against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea started since 1950, very soon after nuclear weapons appear in the world. The United States began to blackmail the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with nuclear weapons during the Korean War, from 1950 to 1953. Beginning in 1957, the United States brought nuclear weapons into South Korea. In the first decade of this century, the United States also designated the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a part of an "axis of evil" and a potential target of pre-emptive nuclear strike.

Furthermore, the present United States Administration excluded the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from the list of negative security assurances in its Nuclear Posture Review, announced in April 2010, while driving the situation of the Korean peninsula to the brink of nuclear war.

Last year, the United States did not even hesitate to dispatch the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* to the sensitive West Sea of Korea; this year, from late February to now, it has conducted reckless joint military exercises with South Korea under the code names "Key Resolve" and "Foal Eagle", mobilizing all kinds of vectors for pre-emptive nuclear strikes. Today, the nuclear threats of the United States against the Korean nation are not a notional concept but an actual reality. This is the reason why the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is compelled to possess its own nuclear deterrence for the purpose of safeguarding the supreme interests and security of the nation and State, and of preventing a nuclear war on the Korean peninsula.

In a word, the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula has been created by the United States, which first introduced nuclear weapons into South Korea and has threatened the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with nuclear weapons for more than half a century. Likewise, the nuclear confrontation on the Korean peninsula is in essence a Democratic People's Republic of Korea-United States confrontation.

The military strikes now being undertaken by the United States and its coalition forces against Libya teach the international community a serious lesson. This military intervention shows that the Libyan model of nuclear disarmament — much talked about by the United States in the past — was an aggressive method of coaxing Libya with such sugar-coated words as "guarantee" and "improvement of relations" in order to disarm and then swallow it by force. It proves once again that peace can be preserved only when any State or nation can have its own strength while high-handed and arbitrary practices are openly practiced in today's world.

It is a consistent position of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to maintain peace and stability and realize the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula through dialogue and negotiation. Any attempt by the United States to force the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon nuclear weapons is nothing but a daydream. The more the United States enforces its hostile policy against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the more the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will strengthen its nuclear deterrence.

If the United States has any real concern for peace and security on the Korean peninsula, it should abandon its anachronistic hostile policy towards Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is fully committed to discharging its international obligations as a responsible nuclear-weapon State.

**Mr. Bravaco** (United States of America): The United States congratulates the Republic of Iraq on its election to the chairmanship of the 2011 session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. Mr. Chairman, we wish you well and pledge our full support as you ably guide the work of the Commission forward. We also thank the other members of the Bureau for their willingness to serve, as well as High Representative Duarte for his support for the Commission, and we offer a special note of appreciation to the Republic of Benin's Permanent Representative, Ambassador Jean-Francis Zinsou, who personally has laboured over many years to seek a successful outcome to the Commission's objectives.

This year, the Disarmament Commission is faced with a great deal of work to complete and very little time in which to complete that work. Fortunately, the task before us emerges against the backdrop of renewed international action, progress and achievement in the arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament arenas.

For it was two years ago tomorrow, on 5 April 2009, that President Barack Obama addressed the people of the beautiful city of Prague, and the people of the world, and recalled another momentous spring in the long struggle for human freedom everywhere. In his address, and most pertinently to the work on which this Commission is about to embark, the President stated clearly and with conviction America's commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons. He outlined a series of steps, initiatives and actions that America would take in the coming years to reinvigorate my country's responsibility to contribute to this historic effort. The President acknowledged that the steps he laid out — strengthening the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, reducing the numbers of nuclear warheads and their role in military strategy, preventing access to nuclear materials by terrorists, and expanding peaceful nuclear cooperation as the right of every nation that renounces nuclear weapons and plays by the rules — would not be easy to achieve. The President said specifically:

> "Now, I know that there are some who will question whether we can act on such a broad agenda. There are those who doubt whether true international cooperation is possible, given inevitable differences among nations. And there are those who hear talk of a world without nuclear weapons and doubt whether it is worth setting a goal that seems impossible to achieve."

Well, in the past two years, the international community has risen to the occasion and taken significant steps in delivering on the promise of a safer world. As one reflects on this period of progress in arms control, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear technology, it is fair to say that the President's speech in Prague helped to set the tone for a number of subsequent advances in these areas. Specific examples of the success that can be achieved when nations commit to doing their part and working together include the April 2010 groundbreaking Nuclear Security Summit, the United States Nuclear Posture Review, the United States Administration's stated intent to transmit to the Senate for its advice and consent to ratification of the Protocols to the African and South Pacific nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties, the successful Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in May 2010, and most recently, the 5 February 2011 entry into force of the New START treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation.

Certainly, there is much more yet to achieve, including bringing into force the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and starting negotiations on a verifiable fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT). In this regard, we are deeply disappointed with the failure of the Conference on Disarmament to take up an FMCT — a failure that casts a shadow over our deliberations here in New York. Nonetheless, at home and in partnership with Governments around the world, the United States will continue working to make these vital multilateral instruments a reality. They are so very long overdue.

As this year's session of the Disarmament Commission begins, let me state clearly that America intends to be as flexible as possible on procedural matters, as well as substantive outcomes. We have come here to do business, achieve results and

foreswear gamesmanship. Accordingly, we supported the establishment of another subsidiary body to address three issues this session: "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons" in Working Group 1; "Elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade" in Working Group 2; and "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons" in Working Group 3.

I would like to recall General Assembly decision 52/492 of 1998, which states among other things that "parallel meetings of [the Commission's] subsidiary bodies should be avoided." In this context, the revised general programme of work approved by the Commission this morning appears to us to take account of this concern; the plan is fair and makes the most of the time available.

Regarding substantive matters, we look forward to receiving as soon as possible the documents which the three Working Group Chairs intend to use as the basis for achieving consensus. My capital, like all others no doubt, will require time to digest Working Group proposals and issue specific guidance, so I respectfully appeal for such information to be provided as soon as possible.

As I mentioned earlier, we have but three weeks left in this issue cycle to conclude our work. My delegation therefore recommends that we distil from previous efforts only the most broadly agreed, realistic and focused approaches that have the best chance of commanding consensus on agreed principles, guidelines, recommendations and/or elements. I readily admit that this is easier to achieve in theory than in practice; if it were not, the Commission would have done so years ago. But we must keep trying. Simply put, we have but two options before us: within the limited time available, to commit to registering some progress, however modest; or alternatively to end the Disarmament Commission's second three-year issue cycle in a row with no result whatsoever.

As always, America will do its part to achieve a positive outcome in this, the international community's deliberative think tank on arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament issues. We look forward to working with all delegations as together we pursue this goal.

**Mr. Šćepanović** (Montenegro): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, and the other members of the Bureau on your election, and to assure you of the full support and cooperation of the Montenegrin delegation. We believe that, under your able leadership, this year's session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission will have a successful outcome.

Montenegro recognizes the significance and important role of the Disarmament Commission as a deliberative multilateral body with universal membership that serves as a forum for thorough discussions and considerations of specific disarmament issues. In that light, we extend our support to the work of the Working Groups and look forward to achieving tangible results and a fruitful conclusion of our three-year cycle.

Montenegro fully aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Hungary on behalf of the European Union.

Montenegro warmly welcomes the latest developments and substantial progress made in the fields of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation, such as the entry into force of the New START treaty, the successful conclusion of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the adoption by consensus of an action plan, the entry into force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, negotiations under way on an arms trade treaty, and so on.

In particular, Montenegro remains firmly committed to the prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and consequently to the implementation of the provisions of the NPT, a key treaty of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, and all of its related action plans, as well as to the relevant Security Council resolutions. Montenegro supports the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty as an integral part of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and welcomes the recent positive progress made in that regard.

As for the Conference on Disarmament, we call for immediate commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty, based on the 1995 Shannon mandate. We cannot afford further delays and must stay engaged in order to find a sustainable solution to overcome the deadlock. We commend the initiative of the Secretary-General to convene a High-

level Meeting in September 2010 on this matter, and fully support the recommendations and follow-up steps to revitalize the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

Montenegro attaches great importance to the issue of conventional weapons. My country is devoted to the full implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and sees the Open-ended Meeting of Governmental Experts to be held in May as an opportunity to enhance its implementation. Montenegro strongly supports the negotiations under way on a comprehensive, legally-binding arms trade treaty, which we believe at its core should set high standards and norms for the transfer of conventional weapons. We welcome the positive results of the two sessions of the Preparatory Committee held so far.

Montenegro welcomes the adoption of the Vientiane Action Plan 2010-2015 at the first Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions in the Lao People's Democratic Republic in November 2010. Allow me to reiterate that my country was among first 30 States to sign and ratify the Convention on Cluster Munitions, thereby making it possible for it to enter into force. I would also like to underscore that last year Montenegro successfully concluded the process of destroying its entire cluster munition stockpile, well ahead of the Convention's specified timeline. This serves as one more proof of Montenegro's strong dedication to playing an active role and contributing in a practical way to multilateral efforts implement the treaty comprehensively and effectively.

The Montenegrin delegation looks forward to engaging in this year's session of the Disarmament Commission and is open to constructive cooperation. I would like to assure you, Mr. Chairman, of our support for your efforts towards an effective organization of our forthcoming work and the achievement of tangible results.

**Mr. Zhang Junan** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, the Chinese delegation would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of this session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, and to assure you of its full cooperation. My delegation also takes this opportunity to express appreciations to your predecessor, Ambassador Jean-Francis Zinsou of Benin, for his outstanding work.

The first decade of the twenty-first century has witnessed complex and profound evolutions of the international security landscape. With traditional and non-traditional security threats interweaving and global challenges and regional hotspots closely interacting, the interdependence among States has never been as strong as it is today. This new security situation calls on us to embrace a new security concept centred on mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and coordination, and to pursue security through cooperation. Only by doing so can we effectively advance the international arms control and disarmament cause and attain the goal of common security and peaceful development shared by all.

This year is to conclude the current deliberation cycle of the Disarmament Commission. During the past three years, a series of positive developments in the international arms control and disarmament arena has been encouraging. The international nuclear process is facing important opportunities, while the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons is gaining wider recognition. The Disarmament Commission can and must reflect these developments. At past sessions, the Commission has held in-depth discussions on relevant agenda items and enhanced mutual understanding thereof. It is the earnest hope of the Chinese delegation that all delegations will cherish the existing working basis, show full flexibility and try their best to achieve positive outcomes from this session so as to do our part in strengthening the status and role of the Disarmament Commission.

It is the common aspiration of the international community to completely prohibit and thoroughly destroy nuclear weapons, and to realize a world free of such weapons. If we are to create a safer world for all, we must first and foremost remove the threat of nuclear war. In this connection, the Chinese delegation holds that nuclear-weapon States should fulfil in good faith their nuclear disarmament obligations, as stipulated in article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), reduce the role of nuclear weapons in their national security policies, and unequivocally undertake not to seek permanent possession of nuclear weapons.

Nuclear-weapon States should unequivocally undertake not to be the first to use nuclear weapons,

not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-weapon-free zones, and commit themselves to concluding an international legal instrument in this regard at an early date. The international community should make concerted efforts to bring forward the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty at an early date, and the early start of negotiations on the fissile material cut-off treaty within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

China appreciates the positive outcomes of the Eighth NPT Review Conference. We also attach great importance to the signing and entry into force of the bilateral nuclear disarmament treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation. We are of the view that countries with the largest nuclear arsenals bear special and primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament, and should continue to make drastic and substantive reductions in their nuclear arsenals. When conditions are ripe, other nuclear-weapon States should also join the multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament. To attain the ultimate goal of complete and comprehensive nuclear disarmament, the international community should develop, at an appropriate time, a viable long-term plan, comprising phased actions, including the conclusion of a convention on the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons.

Effectively preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons is an essential condition for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. From a broader perspective, it is also a precondition for the maintenance of global and regional peace and security. In addressing the complex and volatile situation of nuclear non-proliferation, the international community should direct efforts towards the following aspects.

First, with a view to addressing the root causes of proliferation, a peaceful and stable international security environment with mutual trust and cooperation should be fostered so as to remove motives for the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Secondly, non-proliferation hot-spot issues should be resolved through political and diplomatic means. On regional nuclear issues, peaceful settlement through dialogue and negotiations is the fundamental way forward.

Thirdly, the international nuclear non-proliferation regime should be consolidated. The universality, authority and effectiveness of the NPT should be further enhanced, and the safeguards function of the International Atomic Energy Agency should be strengthened.

Fourthly, the legitimate right of each State to the peaceful use of nuclear energy should be respected, and the impartiality and non-discriminatory nature of international efforts on nuclear non-proliferation should be ensured. Meanwhile, the practice of abuse and double standards should be discarded.

Fifthly, nuclear security levels should be raised globally and nuclear risks should be reduced. Effective measures should be taken to ensure the safety of nuclear facilities and materials to prevent the diversion of such materials. All countries should strengthen cooperation on combating nuclear terrorism.

China has always actively supported and participated in international non-proliferation efforts, and has strictly fulfilled its obligations. We have always called for the peaceful resolution of the Korean peninsula and Iranian nuclear issues through dialogue and negotiations, and have made constant efforts to that end.

The declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade is of great significance to the promotion of the international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation process. China is of the view that the declaration of the fourth disarmament decade should be in line with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and the guiding principles enshrined in the Final Document (resolution S-10/2) of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Furthermore, the declaration should take into consideration the new characteristics of the current international security situation and specify, in a comprehensive and balanced way, the main tasks and priorities of international arms control and non-proliferation this decade.

During the previous session of the Disarmament Commission, we held valuable discussions on the elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade, and achieved much common understanding. We hope that all parties can strengthen their efforts, respect and accommodate each

other's concerns, show flexibility and strive to reach an agreement on the elements of the declaration at an early date.

China supports confidence-building measures (CBMs) in the field of conventional weapons. We welcome revisiting that agenda item in the Disarmament Commission. China has always been and will remain a staunch force in safeguarding international and regional peace and stability. For many years, at the bilateral level and in multilateral frameworks, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Regional Forum of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia, China has worked with the relevant countries to vigorously explore and practice CBMs with a view to enhancing mutual trust and promoting regional security. China also participated in the United Nations Standardized Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures and the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.

Looking towards the second decade of the twenty-first century, we are confident about the future of the international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation cause. China is ready to join hands with all other countries in renewing our contributions to building a harmonious world, with lasting peace and common prosperity.

**Mr. Shin Dong-ik** (Republic of Korea): At the outset, I wish to join previous speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the Chair of the Disarmament Commission at its 2011 substantive session. I would also like to congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their elections. I am sure that your able stewardship will guide us through these three-weeks of deliberations.

During the past few years, the international community has witnessed multiple positive steps in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Those include a Security Council summit (see S/PV.6191) on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, followed by its adoption of resolution 1887 (2009), the signing and ratification of the New START between the two largest nuclear Powers, and, finally, the adoption, after a decade, of the Final Document (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) by consensus at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The adoption of the Final Document at the Eighth NPT Review Conference in particular amounts to formal recognition by the international community of the fact that disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons has resurfaced once again as a keystone of the global agenda and that the responsibility to achieve the common goal of a nuclear-free world rests on the shoulders of both nuclear States and non-nuclear States alike.

As we gather here today against that backdrop, we must not simply complacently look back at what we have achieved, but instead drive ourselves forward to take the next steps. Indeed, I hope that this year's deliberations at the Disarmament Commission, now in the final stage of a three-year cycle, will be able to facilitate global efforts on disarmament and non-proliferation, while simultaneously laying a sound foundation to further our common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

This year, we also need to give more attention to the agenda item on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. As the Commission was unable to take up the agenda item in the past two years, it is important that there is constructive deliberation on the issue during this session.

Considering the past decade of stalemate in the field of disarmament, it is clear that the international community in general, and not only the disarmament community, needs and expects some long-awaited progress. My delegation hopes that our deliberation on the issue of declaring the 2010s as the next disarmament decade will proceed in a practical and efficient manner so that we can agree upon the text expeditiously. In that regard, I look forward to engaging in meaningful discussions in the following three areas during this session.

First, over the past decade there have been increasing concerns regarding the effectiveness of the Conference on Disarmament. That is why the Secretary-General convened the High-level Meeting on Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament and Taking Forward Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations in September 2010. If the Conference remains mired in deadlock, its status and legitimacy as the premier forum for disarmament will be jeopardized. I firmly believe that the Conference should act quickly if it wants to keep playing its central

role. We call upon all Conference members to cooperate on commencing substantive work on a fissile material cut-off treaty at the earliest possible time, not only for nuclear non-proliferation but also for nuclear disarmament.

Secondly, the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is another task on which we must take decisive action. The prospects for the early entry into force of the CTBT are brighter than ever. We must seize the opportunity for action created by the current circumstances. The Republic of Korea calls upon those States that have not yet ratified the Treaty, in particular the remaining nine annex 2 States, to do so immediately. We also stress the importance of maintaining a moratorium on nuclear testing until the entry into force of the CTBT.

Thirdly, along with the ongoing efforts to achieve the universality of the NPT, my delegation believes that the monitoring and verification mechanisms of the Treaty need to be strengthened even further through the universalization of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) additional protocol. In particular, the Final Document of the Eighth NPT Review Conference could breathe new life into the NPT. In that regard, the Government of the Republic of Korea reaffirms its commitment to fully implementing the conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

Let me now draw the Commission's attention to the most pressing issue confronting us. International efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear-weapon programmes remain seriously hampered by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In particular, the country's revelation regarding its uranium enrichment programme last November has opened a new and disturbing chapter in the North Korean nuclear issue, further complicating our task of realizing complete and verifiable denuclearization. Without a doubt, North Korea's uranium enrichment programme clearly violates the relevant Security Council resolutions and is contrary to its commitments under the 2005 Joint Statement of the Fourth Round of the Six-Party Talks.

Despite that blatant act of non-compliance, we are continuing our efforts to revitalize dialogue in an effort to keep moving forward, not backwards, in the denuclearization process. We are ready to engage the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in such a dialogue once we are certain of its readiness to end its nuclear ambitions and programmes once and for all.

For the time being, however, in the light of the seriousness of the uranium enrichment programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, we believe that the international community should send that country a clear, unambiguous message that continuing defiance of its international obligations will not be rewarded and will serve only to deepen its isolation. The absence of appropriate actions against such provocations as the uranium enrichment programme would only lead the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to mistakenly believe that the international community is unwilling and unable to address its persistent pursuit of nuclear development.

In that regard, the international community must strongly condemn North Korea's clear violation of Security Council resolutions 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009) and urge it to fully comply with other relevant Council resolutions, especially by abandoning all of its nuclear programmes, including its uranium enrichment programme, in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

A new consensus now seems to be forming in the international community, not only towards nuclear non-proliferation but also regarding the eventual goal of a nuclear-free world. Having witnessed some meaningful signs, we need to redouble our efforts to ensure that they produce tangible results. We must work hard and make bold decisions in laying the foundation for lasting progress. My delegation once again stresses our shared sense of responsibility and willingness to cooperate to ensure the success of the upcoming deliberations and beyond.

**The Chair**: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply. In that connection, I would like to remind delegations that the number of interventions in exercise of the right of reply for any delegation on any item at a given meeting is limited to two. The first intervention should be limited to 10 minutes, and the second to five minutes.

**Mr. Yun Yong Il** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I would like to exercise my right of reply in response to the statement made by the representative of the Republic of Korea.

The uranium enrichment programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is purely of a peaceful nature and is intended to produce fuel for light-water reactors to pave the way for meeting the ever-growing domestic need for electricity. In other words, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is exercising the right of all countries to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Many countries are currently exercising that right for the purposes of their economic development. Similarly, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's uranium enrichment programme is fully in line with the international trend of development and international law.

I would like to clarify that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea does not recognize, and completely rejects, Security Council resolutions 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009).

**Mr. Rim Kap-soo** (Republic of Korea): I have requested the floor in exercise of the right of reply to the statements made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's.

First of all, our understanding is that the right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy is granted to States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) that faithfully adhere to non-proliferation regulations and norms. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea announced its unilateral withdrawal from the NPT in 2003 and conducted nuclear-weapon testing in 2006 and 2009. Accordingly, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should not claim any right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

In addition, Security Council resolutions 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009) clearly demand that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes — and I stress, all existing nuclear programmes, irrespective of their nature — in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

**Mr. Yun Yong Il** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The Democratic People's Republic of Korea acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in the hope of realizing the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. However, the NPT was unable to prevent the deployment of nuclear weapons in South Korea and the nuclear threats of the United States against my country.

Furthermore, the NPT was misused by the United States as an instrument to exert pressure on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which is why my country withdrew from the NPT. As long as nuclear weapons exist in the world and their use and threat of use, high-handedness and military intervention continue, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will never rejoin the NPT.

The South Korean delegation just said that no country outside the NPT should have the right to peacefully use nuclear energy. Despite the South Korean delegation's claim, however, countries outside the NPT also have that right. That is the current situation in the world.

I would like to take this opportunity to call for the delegation of the Republic of Korea not to collaborate or stand with the United States, which is pursuing its ambition to control North-East Asia as a whole, bearing in mind that reliance on foreign forces is a self-destructive move that will have catastrophic results for the Korean nation.

The Republic of Korea should implement the North-South Joint Declaration of 15 June 2000 and the Joint Statement of 3 October 2007, signed by our respective leaders in Pyongyang. That is the only way to realize the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

**Mr. Rim Kap-soo** (Republic of Korea): My delegation does not want to consume further time and energy in repeating the clear and unequivocal position expressed by the international community on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea nuclear issue and other provocations.

My delegation would like to draw members' attention to a few documents — namely, Security Council resolutions 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009), the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) and the International Atomic Energy Agency resolution of September 2010 on Democratic People's Republic of Korea issues — which clearly reaffirm that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea cannot, in any case, have the status of a nuclear-weapon State.

The 2010 NPT Final Document also states that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has to fulfil its commitment under the 2005 Joint Statement of the Fourth Round of the Six-Party Talks and its

obligations under Security Council resolution 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009), which clearly demand that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

I would like to advise my colleagues from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to take a look at the numerous resolutions and documents adopted by the international community.

*The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.*